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Wednesday, 30 May 2018, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Ms. Wronecka	(Poland)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Solíz
	China	Mr. Shen Bo
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Djédjé
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mrs. Haley

Agenda

The situation concerning Iraq

Eighteenth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2018/353)

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 2367 (2017) (S/2018/359)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Iraq

Eighteenth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013) (S/2018/353)

Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to Security Council resolution 2367 (2017) (S/2018/359)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Iraq to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq; Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism; and Ms. Michèle Coninsx, Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/353, which contains the eighteenth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 2107 (2013), as well as to document S/2018/359, which contains the report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2367 (2017).

I now give the floor to Mr. Kubiš.

Mr. Kubiš: On 12 May 2018 — within the constitutional time-frame — Iraq held elections for its national Parliament, the Council of Representatives. Prime Minister Haider Al Abadi, after the closing of the polls, noted that the country had held the elections on time, that people had been able to cast their votes and select their representatives freely and safely and that the liberated areas had experienced a free voting process for the first time after the victory of the Iraqi forces and the defeat of Da'esh.

The Secretary-General, on 13 May, congratulated the people of Iraq on the holding of parliamentary elections and stated that, following the military defeat of Da'esh, the elections represented further progress in building a stronger Iraqi democracy. He saluted the tireless efforts of electoral officials, party agents and the security forces in making the elections largely peaceful and orderly.

Following the elections, international partners, including the Governments of Kuwait, Qatar, Iran, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United States of America and the United Kingdom and the European Union, also congratulated the Iraqi people.

The elections, held in a generally calm and stable environment, were marked by a low voter turnout: the Independent High Electoral Commission informed about the participation of 44.5 per cent — just 10.8 million out of 24.3 million eligible voters — a significant decrease in comparison with previous national elections in Iraq after 2003. The new Parliament will also experience a massive turnover; according to the preliminary results, less than 100 of the incumbent members — the total number of which in the current Parliament is over 300 — have secured their place in the new Council of Representatives. The decision by more than half of the voting population not to exercise their democratic right sends a strong signal to the elites ruling the country since 2003. I urge the Iraqi political elites to draw the necessary conclusions on the need for improved representation, justice for all, democratic accountability and good governance, devoid of corruption, a sectarian quota system, nepotism or patronage.

I also urge political leaders to ensure the full participation of women in negotiations on the formation of the next ruling coalition and the Government, and their representation at the highest levels in Iraq's political and decision-making structures in the Parliament and the Government, as pledged by many political leaders in the election campaign.

Following the closing of the polls and the announcement of the preliminary results, many Iraqi political leaders publicly endorsed the electoral process, including the Prime Minister and the President. They continue to urge a timely conduct and conclusion of the complaint process, certification and acceptance of the results, and a speeding-up of the formation of the new Government, within the constitutional timeline and in accordance with relevant legal procedures. Some other political forces and leaders have raised concerns over some of the technical shortfalls encountered with the

electronic vote tabulation devices, as well as reports of fraud and vote rigging, active intimidation of voters, including by some armed formations, and political interference. They have demanded the recount of votes in some governorates, the annulment of results of out-of-country voting and the voting of the internally displaced persons (IDPs), and even fresh elections. Amid questions about the legality of their decisions, including from the Independent High Electoral Commission, on 28 May, the Council of Representatives voted to request the Commission to undertake the manual counting of 10 per cent of the ballot boxes, which could trigger the manual counting of all the ballots in the case of a discrepancy of 25 per cent or more. It also requested cancellation of the out-of-country and IDP voting.

On 24 May, the Council of Ministers decided to form a High Commission to investigate reports and documents pertaining to the elections. The High Commission already referred the Independent High Electoral Commission to the Integrity Commission, a move rejected by the Commission as interference in its independence.

Six Kurdistani parties have questioned the credibility of the electoral process in the Kurdistan region and have been calling for a recount of the votes in the Kurdistan governorates, and even for a reholding of the elections. On the other hand, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan have announced their satisfaction with the outcome of the elections and their intention to start dialogue on coalition-building with political parties in Baghdad.

In Kirkuk governorate — one of several hotspots of complaints — the situation remains volatile, with Turkmen and Arab parties demanding manual recounting of the election results, while the Independent High Electoral Commission has complained that they have obstructed its work.

On 17 May, I called on the Electoral Commission to act expeditiously and seriously address all complaints, including, as necessary, the conduct of a partial manual recount in selected locations, notably in Kirkuk. I stressed the importance of undertaking such measures in full transparency, witnessed by stakeholders, to strengthen confidence in the process. I also called on all political actors to uphold the peace and to remain committed to resolving any electoral disputes through the established legal channels.

We urge the independent electoral management bodies to adjudicate all appeals properly, fully and in time to enable corrections of the problems, justice and the timely certification of the final election results. I also wish to highlight the readiness and availability of United Nations electoral advice and expertise in support of any activities and measures that may be required to retain confidence in the process, including in the light of the forthcoming provincial council elections across Iraq on 22 December and Kurdistan regional elections on 30 September.

Given the controversies around the Council of Representatives elections, the Kurdistan regional Independent High Electoral and Referendum Commission has decided not to use electronic vote tabulation machines. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) stands ready to advise and support that electoral process.

The post-election phase represents a crucial time for Iraq. Building on the achievements of the current Government, we urge political leaders to prioritize inclusive, non-sectarian dialogue and to ensure the swift formation of a new genuinely national Government that reflects the will of the people of Iraq. It is essential that the new Government works as one across the sectarian and ethnic divides in pursuing much-needed political, economic and social reforms, based on the principles of patriotism and citizenship with equal rights, responsibilities, justice and opportunity for all and good governance, while working to improve the economy, public services delivery and social justice. A new Government, based on such an approach, will guarantee the future of Iraq as a stable, prosperous, united, democratic, fully sovereign and independent federal State with good relations with all its neighbours, based on mutual respect, non-interference and common interests as prerequisites for stability, cooperation and prosperity, including in the region.

The humanitarian crisis in Iraq continues. More than 2.1 million people remain displaced and in need of humanitarian assistance. However, the funding to provide the most vulnerable with emergency support is at critically low levels. Out of the required $569 million in the humanitarian response plan, only $101 million in donor contributions — 18 per cent — had been received as of 15 May. In addition, demining and stabilization efforts are underfunded. I therefore appeal to the donor community to further extend its generosity to the people

of Iraq for humanitarian, stabilization, demining and rehabilitation needs.

Despite the Prime Minister's 2017 directive on the civilian character of IDP camps, a continued military presence in camps across Iraq, the sexual harassment of women and girls, the diversion of humanitarian assistance, the detention and disappearance of their residents, recruitment activities inside the camps and attacks by armed actors on humanitarian staff remain deeply concerning. In April Amnesty International issued a report that concluded that Iraqi women and children with perceived ties to Da'esh experience serious protection issues in camps, including the denial of assistance, restrictions on freedom of movement and sexual harassment, rape and sexual exploitation. I wish to underline that the United Nations in Iraq, in cooperation with the Government, has been engaged, notably through the Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse network, established in 2016, in an urgent follow-up on reported situations.

With regard to the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third country nationals and missing Kuwaiti property, in April, for the second time in 15 years, Iraq hosted meetings of the tripartite mechanism, demonstrating its commitment to the missing persons file and a steady return to normality. I am grateful for the positive response received with regard to the proposals put forward by UNAMI during those meetings, namely, a pilot project to conduct mass grave site surveys in Iraq with the help of the United Nations Global Service Centre in Brindisi.

I would like to call upon the Member States in possession of relevant satellite imagery from 1990 and 1991 to come forward and provide analysis and information to the Government of Iraq that could assist in the identification of burial locations. The missing Kuwaiti property file also did not register any direct progress during the period under review. UNAMI has been meeting with the Iraqi Ministry of Foreign Affairs to discuss how best it can support and facilitate the repatriation of already located Kuwaiti property, which has been pending for more than a year.

The President: I thank Mr. Kubiš for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Voronkov.

Mr. Voronkov (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I would like to thank the Polish presidency for convening today's meeting. It is an extremely important one. Using Iraq as an example, we will be discussing how coordinated efforts within the United Nations system generate speedy and positive results.

(*spoke in English*)

On behalf of the Secretary-General, I would like to start by expressing my solidarity with the peoples and the Governments of countries where terrorist attacks were recently perpetrated. Regrettably, the list is a long one and includes Afghanistan, Belgium, France, Indonesia, Iraq, Libya and Nigeria. Our prayers are with the victims and the survivors of those heinous attacks. I also call upon all Member States to redouble their efforts to strengthen international cooperation to address terrorism in a comprehensive manner and bring those responsible to justice.

I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the joint visit to Iraq we conducted with Ms. Michèle Coninsx in March. The visit was conducted within the framework of the common efforts of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED) to facilitate the delivery of counter-terrorism-related technical assistance to Member States in accordance with resolution 2395 (2017). In that resolution the Council underscored the need for the two United Nations entities to work closely together.

The visit took place at the invitation of the Government of Iraq and with the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq, for which I am grateful. I am honoured to have the opportunity to brief the Council today alongside my colleagues CTED Executive Director Madame Michèle Coninsx and Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), as well as Permanent Representative of Iraq, Ambassador Bahr Aluloom.

Iraq has been affected by, and is suffering severely from, the consequences of terrorism. The military setback of Da'esh clearly demonstrates the long-term resolve of the Iraqi authorities in their fight against terrorism. The continued vigilance and determination of the Iraqi Government to consolidate the military victory against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) through a comprehensive approach focused on both prevention and resilience is of the utmost importance. In that regard, I would like to stress the continued commitment of Iraq in addressing the 16

recommendations made by the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1373 (2001), concerning counter-terrorism, on advancing Iraq's efforts to implement key counter-terrorism priorities.

During our joint mission with CTED to Iraq, we were able to hold high-level consultations with a number of ministers and senior officials. In order to understand better the realities on the ground, we visited Fallujah to discuss the additional support the United Nations could provide to the local population.

All our interlocutors stressed Iraq's continued commitment to fighting terrorism as it transitions from a military-focused counter-terrorism approach to a more comprehensive one, which also includes preventive, law enforcement and criminal justice components. It was the conclusion of our Iraqi interlocutors that national reconciliation and reconstruction, owned and driven by the Iraqi people, are essential to prevent the resurgence of violent extremism and terrorism in Iraq. I would like to express my words of appreciation for that particular approach.

During our visit to Fallujah, we had an opportunity to meet with the mayor of the town and a number of survivors. We witnessed the large-scale devastation caused by ISIL. I was personally touched by the admirable resilience of the Iraqi people while observing the reconstruction work in areas surrounded by mine fields and booby traps, and the faces of the young people studying in rehabilitated school premises.

Our joint delegation reiterated the United Nations strong support for Iraq. Based on the priority needs identified during the mission and on resolution 2395 (2017), the Office of Counter-Terrorism, together with CTED, proposed five areas in which it could provide technical assistance to Iraq: first, advice for the development of a comprehensive national counter-terrorism strategy; secondly, training in countering the financing of terrorism; thirdly, the prevention of violent extremism through youth skills development and vocational training, including for youth in Fallujah; fourthly, the prevention of violent extremism through strategic communications; and, finally, capacity-building to prevent and respond to weapons of mass destruction-related terrorism.

In order to advance our fruitful dialogue and in consultation with the Government of Iraq and UNAMI, we were able to dispatch a joint Office of Counter-Terrorism-CTED scoping mission to Iraq at the beginning of May to identify the specific elements of programmatic support under the five priorities I mentioned. The scoping mission held meetings with a range of Iraqi ministries and national agencies, the diplomatic community, as well as the United Nations country team and the World Bank. Based on the findings of the scoping mission, the Office of Counter-Terrorism is now working on the development of project concept notes on the priority thematic topics. The projects could have a measurable impact on the ground, while avoiding duplication with existing initiatives. The Office of Counter-Terrorism is also planning to deploy a consultant to support Iraq in finalizing its national counter-terrorism strategy. The practical implementation of those projects, in consultation with the Government of Iraq, will start next month. We took a total of three months to go from the initial stages to the start of project implementation.

As the Secretary-General has often emphasized, the Office of Counter-Terrorism is committed to delivering on key counter-terrorism capacity-building priorities of Member States, as one United Nations, in a coordinated and coherent manner, and as requested by Member States. Our first joint Office of Counter-Terrorism-CTED mission to Iraq, in collaboration with UNAMI, was a concrete step in that direction. We plan to further build on that approach in other regions of the world.

The President: I thank Mr. Voronkov for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Coninsx.

Ms. Coninsx: It is my great honour and pleasure to address the Security Council today alongside Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, and Mr. Ján Kubiš, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq. It was indeed a joint and historic visit, and I can only agree with what was said by Under-Secretary-General Voronkov in his briefing to the Council.

I wish to begin by conveying my deepest respect for the Government and the people of Iraq for their continued determination to overcome the challenge of terrorism and for their true resilience. I also wish to express my continued and unwavering support for all the victims of terrorism in Iraq, as well as their families.

The Under-Secretary-General and I were able to witness at first-hand the remarkable determination of the Iraqi people, in both Baghdad and Fallujah, during our recent high-level consultations with the Iraqi Government. As Mr. Voronkov just mentioned, in Fallujah there was a moment where we had to stand still, look at the class of young students ,with their one female teacher, in a newly built school in the middle of rubble and debris. That was the best sign of the resilience of the population of that small town. It also demonstrated the need to give those children what they deserve: the right to development, education, hope and perspective. It motivated us greatly.

The consultations were conducted in accordance with the respective mandates of the Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED), and within the framework of the strengthened coordination between the two Offices called for by the Council in resolution 2395 (2017). Our discussions focused in part on the facilitation and provision of tailored capacity-building assistance to Iraq, on the basis of the priority needs identified by the Committee in accordance with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

I would also like to thank the Iraqi authorities, especially the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations for his instrumental role. I thank the Iraqi authorities for the hospitality extended to us during our visit, as well as for their continued willingness to engage in constructive dialogue with us on a broad range of issues.

I now wish to inform the Council about the recent efforts of CTED to assist Iraq in the area of counter-terrorism. Acting on behalf of the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC), CTED conducted an assessment visit to Iraq in September 2015. The visit report was endorsed by the Iraqi Government in March 2016, and subsequently adopted by the Committee. At that time, Iraq's response to the terrorist threat was primarily military in nature.

In an effort to assist Iraq to combat terrorism in non-military areas as well, particularly in the post-conflict phase, CTED identified — as was mentioned previously — 33 key recommendations on ways to strengthen an overall response. While recognizing that Iraq had the capacity to implement several of those recommendations, the Committee nonetheless noted that Iraq would benefit from receiving technical assistance in half of the recommendations, 16 priority areas. Those areas included legal and judicial matters, counter-financing of terrorism, law enforcement and border control, and countering radicalization and incitement to commit terrorist acts.

The 16 priority needs were identified on the basis of CTED's long-term dialogue and partnership with Iraqi counter-terrorism officials. They were formulated in accordance with the international best codes and practices of our partner organizations, including INTERPOL, the World Customs Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), and others.

In follow-up to the visit, we have endeavoured to make the findings of the visit accessible to as many donors and implementing partners as possible. In that context, we might say that our approach has been unique. For the first time since its establishment, the Committee held two informal meetings on Iraq for donors and partners, in March 2016 and May 2017, respectively. The meetings enabled the Committee to follow up on progress achieved since the 2015 visit and to take stock of recent developments and continued challenges. That approach has also since been emulated with regard to Afghanistan.

Since the two informal meetings, CTED has returned to Iraq on several occasions in an effort to ensure that the discussions held at Headquarters continued to reflect the situation on the ground. The various activities have been organized in close cooperation with the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and have involved Iraqi Government officials, representatives of the donor community, international and regional organizations and various United Nations entities.

The focus of our efforts has been on facilitating the integration of the Committee's recommendations into the existing planned programmes of our implementing partners. We are determined to ensure that our partnership with the Iraqi Government is complemented by close cooperation with UNAMI and that our work on counter-terrorism is fully complementary with UNAMI's overall mandate. I wish to thank the Iraqi Government for its continued commitment to the process. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the Special Representative and his entire team for their invaluable cooperation.

Throughout our engagement with Iraq, whether in New York, Baghdad or Fallujah, Iraq has retained full ownership — I think it is really important to underline this point — of the assistance, facilitation and delivery process and has continued to endorse the 16 identified priority areas. Our implementing partners and organizations have also continued to share and update information concerning their current and planned efforts, areas in which they continue to require financial support and areas in which they might be able to partner with other implementing agencies and stakeholders. All this information is entered into a matrix that is designed to ensure full transparency for our partners in Iraq, New York and the relevant capitals. The process helps us not only to avoid duplication and overlap, but also to develop new partnerships.

An example in that regard was our recent facilitation of a legislative drafting workshop organized by the Terrorism Prevention Branch of UNODC. The workshop led to the development of draft counter-terrorism legislation that has been submitted to the Iraqi National Counter-Terrorism Committee for subsequent consideration and adoption by the Parliament. I wish to reiterate the need for Iraq to actively manage the adoption of counter-terrorism legislation in accordance with the relevant international standards, in order to ensure that the perpetrators of terrorist acts are brought to justice in accordance with human rights and the rule of law.

The Counter-terrorism Committee is currently considering ways to strengthen its assessment process and follow-up mechanisms, pursuant to paragraph 9 of resolution 2395 (2017). I firmly believe that the example of CTED's engagement with Iraq will be very useful to the Committee's work in that area. I am absolutely convinced that this historic joint visit and the follow-up that was recently organized by the Office of Counter-Terrorism,with the participation of CTED, will be a good example to follow.

We are grateful for the continued efforts of all implementing partners that have helped Iraq to achieve such encouraging progress in implementing some of the Committee's priority recommendations. We urge them to continue their efforts and to encourage other partners to join with the Committee, CTED and the Iraqi Government in their efforts to strengthen Iraq's counter-terrorism capacities in the areas identified by the Committee.

I wish to assure the Council that CTED will continue, in close cooperation with the Under-Secretary-General's Office, the Office of Counter-Terrorism and UNAMI, to engage closely with its implementing partners to determine the most effective ways to support Iraq. At the end of the day, it is only a question of transparency, accountability and impact. The joint visit was certainly historic in its approach, and I firmly hope that it will also be historic in its results and impact and that we finally honour all of the victims of the past in Iraq and that we avoid future victims there and in the rest of the world.

The President: I thank Ms. Coninsx for her briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mrs. Haley (United States of America): I would like to thank the briefers for their statements. I especially want to express our gratitude to Mr. Kubiš, for his three years of service in leading the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) through what has been a very challenging period.

Just three years ago, Iraq was in a very different place. The Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS) controlled Mosul, Iraq's second-largest city, and it captured territory stretching to within 30 minutes of Baghdad. ISIS fighters were committing unspeakable atrocities against Iraqis, including selling women into sexual slavery and murdering religious minorities. They were using their safe haven to plan attacks against the West.

But that was three years ago. Today Iraq is liberated. With the support of the United States and other coalition allies, Iraqis have taken their country back. Displaced persons are returning to their homes and beginning to rebuild. Most importantly, Iraqis have successfully conducted national parliamentary elections. Iraqi security forces went from taking territory back from ISIS to protecting polling places in just a few short months.

Government-formation talks are already under way. This is a key moment in Iraqi history. Iraq's next Government is going to make a series of important decisions that will set Iraq's course for decades to come. It will fall to Iraq's next Government to decide whether to truly value diversity and create opportunities for all of Iraq's people, including some of Iraq's most vulnerable citizens, in towns and villages far from

Baghdad. The next Government will have to decide whether Iraq is serious about elevating female leaders, and it will be responsible for governing inclusively. That means setting policies that allow Iraq to close the door on the extremism and the sectarian politics that have caused so much suffering before.

Iraq's next Government has its work cut out for it. Bold leadership will be required. Government formation is a challenging process, but once it is complete, the United States will stand ready to support Iraq as it continues moving towards a more peaceful and prosperous future. As Iraq emerges from the shadow ISIS terror, the Government has to focus on getting the basics right. Keeping the lights on and paving roads may seem like small steps, but delivering such services will be essential for the credibility of the new Iraqi Government. It will also be vital for the Government to respect and promote human rights. Especially after the crimes of ISIS, Iraqis must be confident that their leaders will uphold the rule of law and pursue accountability for atrocities. One important part of that effort will be the work carried out by the United Nations and Iraq under resolution 2379 (2017) to collect evidence of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide by ISIS. That collaboration could serve as a model on how to achieve justice throughout Iraq.

There is no question that Iraq is in a tough neighbourhood. Surrounded by serious threats, Iraq must be a force for stability in the region. The United States looks forward to a partnership with the next Iraqi Government that will allow us to address these threats, combat terrorism and strengthen the independence of Iraq's institutions. Just as Iraq is starting a new chapter, the United Nations and its Mission in Iraq must adapt too.

Last year, the Security Council requested that the United Nations carry out external assessment of UNAMI. The review team came back with a long list of recommendations. Many are quite technical, but they add up to an important vision for reform, one that would make UNAMI more efficient and better at coordinating among the many different United Nations agencies that operate on the ground. Now the responsibility falls to the Secretary-General to fully carry out the recommendations and keep the Council informed on the progress made on them. The United States will closely follow that progress.

This month we will also launch the most substantial review by the Security Council of the UNAMI mandate in years. The new mandate will be more focused, responsive to the needs of the Iraqi people and tailored to address the current challenges in Iraq. The United Nations must target the areas where Iraq needs the greatest support, such as political reconciliation, the delivery of humanitarian aid and support to Government institutions to provide basic services.

Iraq's achievements in defeating ISIS and carrying out elections deserve our collective recognition and praise. Iraq has taken major strides towards a more stable, secure and democratic future. Now Iraq's leaders have the hard task of assembling their Government and showing that they can deliver on the high expectations of their people. The United States will be ready to support Iraq in achieving that goal.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank Mr. Ján Kubiš, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov and Ms. Michèle Coninsx for their briefings. I commend the efforts of the United Nations in providing advice and assisting the people and the Government of Iraq, in accordance with resolution 2367 (2017), through the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). We renew our support to Mr. Kubiš and we commend his efforts at the helm of UNAMI. We also renew our support to the efforts of his Deputy Special Representative for Political Affairs, Ms. Alice Walpole, especially when it comes to determining the fate of Kuwaiti and third-party nationals who went missing, including as well the missing Kuwaiti national archives, which are part of Kuwait's important heritage, pursuant to Council resolution 2107 (2013).

We congratulate Iraq on the successful holding of parliamentary elections in mid-May, which took place in a democratic and transparent environment across the country, thereby reflecting the high national spirit in Iraq, in line with the Constitution and international democratic standards. We hope that those positive signs will be put to use in order to form the new Iraqi Government. We also hope that Iraq will be able to create a national consensus Government that can meet the aspirations of its people and establish security, growth and prosperity for this brotherly country.

At the same time, we recognize that this year is crucial for Iraq, especially with regard to restoring security and stability and moving forward with reconstruction. We congratulate the Government and

the people of Iraq for fully liberating their land from the control of Da'esh terrorists. Iraq is starting a new phase that requires continued international support and solidarity if it is to confront security, political, humanitarian and economic challenges. We have sought to alleviate those drastic conditions given the suffering of the Iraqi people. Consequently, in mid-February, we organized the Kuwait International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq. It was a successful conference with broad international participation to allow for the start of the reconstruction phase and the return of internally displaced persons. We have great hope for the future, security and stability of Iraq, which in turn are an integral part of the security and stability of the region as a whole.

Regarding the international commitments and the remaining humanitarian issues related to missing Kuwaitis and third-party nationals and Kuwait's national archives, we continue to follow the matter closely through the Secretary-General's reports and the briefings of the Special Representative, pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2107 (2013). We are disappointed at the lack of progress on that front despite efforts made in exploration and excavation, as well as getting further information on possible burial sites.

We share the Secretary-General's disappointment that there is no information or evidence so far about the national Kuwaiti archives. These are highly sensitive issues that are related to building confidence between Kuwait and Iraq. We look forward to adopting a new approach in order to settle these matters and achieve the required outcome, including through the Technical Sub-committee of the Tripartite Commission, headed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). We welcome the steps taken by the ICRC to achieve further progress. However, those ongoing efforts are not sufficient to make significant progress on the ground in order to end the suffering of the families of the missing people, which has been going for more than 27 years. That requires further commitment and determination.

In conclusion, the State of Kuwait looks forward to continuing its cooperation with the Republic of Iraq, as our two countries seek to settle problems and build relationships based on the fundamentals of good neighbourly relations and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations. The State of Kuwait will spare no effort to assist Iraq in all areas in order for the country to overcome all its challenges. We hope that all commitments will be fulfilled according to the relevant Security Council resolutions, for we believe in the need to support the Iraqi people to achieve security, stability and peace so as to help Iraq regain its status and position regionally and internationally.

We commend UNAMI's efforts and endeavours in that regard. We will continue our full cooperation with UNAMI in order to execute its mandate to the fullest.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, the Executive Director of the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate, Ms. Michèle Coninsx, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Mr. Ján Kubiš, for their briefings. My delegation also acknowledges the outstanding role being played by UNAMI in the carrying out of its mandate. We encourage UNAMI to continue advancing dialogue and coordination for bolstering the peace process and reconciliation in Iraq.

We highlight the holding of parliamentary elections on 12 May, which were conducted in an orderly way in a violence-free environment. We call on the elected representatives and the political actors concerned to dialogue and enter into negotiations that will enable them to establish continuous governance and develop solid institutions that will take the necessary measures for the stabilization and rebuilding of Iraq.

We also note the progress made in the establishment of a State-owned oil company under the supervision of the Council of Ministers. We are convinced that the sovereign administration of those resources will be of great help for the rebuilding of Iraq and the restoration of basic services for the people in general.

We also encourage ongoing dialogue between the federal Government and the regional Government of Kurdistan in order to peacefully resolve pending issues, since it was through dialogue that the Erbil and Sulaymaniyah airports were reopened to international traffic and federal resources were allocated to pay public servants in Kurdistan. As such, we call on both parties to continue to work together on a consensual basis to address and resolve common issues.

Despite the progress made, we regret the continuation of asymmetrical attacks that claim the lives

of innocent civilians. During the reporting period, at least 170 people were killed and 300 injured, including women and children. It is important to highlight that a significant number of those victims occurred as a result of the detonation of improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war.

In that regard, we highlight the work carried out by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), which, during the reporting period, identified and removed almost 500 explosive devices deployed in different parts of Iraq's territory. The clearing and removal of explosive remnants of war is essential, as the security of the population is essential to beginning the process of reconstruction in Iraq. We therefore call upon the international community to support the work of UNMAS and unite efforts to effectively implement resolution 2365 (2017).

Noting the efforts spearheaded by Iraq to identify mass graves and patrimonial goods, such as those belonging to Kuwait, my delegation commends the convening of the meeting of the tripartite mechanism in April in Iraq. To that end, we call upon the international community to lend its support for the capacity-building that the Iraqi Government requires to move forward in the search and identification of possible areas where mass graves might be located.

The declaration of victory made as a result of Prime Minister Al Abadi's campaign to free Iraq from the control of Da'esh 9 December last year is an important achievement not only for Iraq but for the entire international community. However, the presence of that terrorist group — which still has the capacity to coordinate and perpetrate attacks against the civilian population and law enforcement agencies, such as those carried out earlier this month in Baghdad and Kirkuk — continues to pose a major threat to the security of the population and to the process of reconstruction and reconciliation in Iraq. Also, the plight of more than 1,500 Yazidi women and girls still under the control of Da'esh remains a concern that must be resolved as soon as possible.

In that regard, we welcome the visit made by the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism to Iraq in March and reiterate the need to develop the capacities of Iraqi institutions to eliminate that threat once and for all by, inter alia, strengthening the fight against terrorism financing, countering terrorist narratives and focusing on educating young people to prevent extremism. The effective implementation of resolution 2354 (2017) on narratives and arguments for the fight against terrorism is a useful tool in the areas of prevention and combating extremist rhetoric. In that understanding, the commencement of the tasks entrusted by resolution 2379 (2017) to the investigative team to identify those responsible for the atrocities committed by Da'esh is of vital importance in bringing those persons before Iraqi courts to account for their criminal acts, as an essential element to fight impunity and indemnify the victims.

We reiterate our sincere appreciation for the courageous, self-sacrificing and determined fight against terrorism that the Iraqi security forces, and the Iraqi people as a whole, have waged on behalf of all of us. That significant achievement must be reinforced by all sectors of society coming together in unity. To that end, the role of political actors and the Government must focus on eliminating sectarian or divisive rhetoric and calling for unity and reconciliation in order to pave the way for the stabilization and reconstruction of Iraq.

Finally, we cannot but recall that one of the root causes of the long-lasting conflict that affected Iraq is the consequence of implementing regime-change policies and carrying out interventionist practices in the internal affairs of States, bringing with it the emergence of chaos, terrorism and militarization, the regrettable results of which continue to be replicated to date.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We commend the convening of this meeting, and thank Mr. Ján Kubiš for his comprehensive briefing on the situation in Iraq and for the valuable work he carries out with his team. We particularly appreciate the briefings delivered by Mr. Vladimir Voronkov and Ms. Michèle Coninsx.

Peru congratulates the Government and the people of Iraq on the successful holding of democratic parliamentary elections. We would also like to highlight the support of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to that end, especially in facilitating the participation of internally displaced persons. We believe, however, that it is important that the special electoral commission be able to respond to the complaints raised about the process, primarily in the city of Kirkuk, as soon as possible. We encourage and look forward to the early formation and establishment of the new Government, which should form a unified

and strong front to address the threats still facing Iraqi society, especially terrorism. We must express our concern about the presence of Da'esh remnants in Iraq. We condemn the recent attacks in Baghdad on civilians and during Ramadan.

We highlight the recent visit to the country by the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) Executive Directorate to assess Iraqi capacities and needs. Based on the work of the (CTC), we encourage greater coordination and complementarity by the United Nations system in its support for the efforts of Member States in the fight against terrorism. In that regard, we welcome the decision of the Iraqi authorities to share the assessment of their requests for technical assistance, with a view to guiding cooperating partners towards projects for the prevention, investigation and prosecution of terrorism, thereby promoting synergy and complementarity. We underline the need to utilize a regional approach, in particular on the challenge posed by foreign terrorist fighters.

We believe that the international community's support for Iraq should also be directed towards the reconstruction and revival of its economy. The International Conference for the Reconstruction of Iraq, held in Kuwait in February, is an important step in that direction. We encourage the new Government to promote policies and programmes of assistance and social development aimed at addressing the root causes of violent extremism. In that regard, we wish to join the Secretary-General's call for international support for the Iraq recovery and resilience programme.

We consider it urgent to prioritize addressing the issue of the nearly 9 million people in need of humanitarian assistance, including the 2 million displaced persons registered by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in April. We also encourage the promotion of greater participation by women and young people in the political, economic and social spheres. We support the recommendations made by UNAMI and UN-Women in that regard, including the strengthening of the intersectoral working group of the national plan of action and its adequate funding.

I will conclude by highlighting the work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Kubiš and his team. My country will continue to closely follow the Iraqi process, especially at this crucial time to move the country towards sustainable peace.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): I welcome the insightful update delivered by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ján Kubiš on the activities of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) and his important contribution to the Security Council's deliberations. Kazakhstan highly values the efforts of UNAMI and the United Nations system to provide critical services to the population of Iraq amid grave and challenging threats and in promoting political dialogue and reconciliation among the parties. At the same time, we are also grateful for the briefings provided by Under-Secretary-General Vladimir Voronkov and Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Director Michèle Coninsx.

Kazakhstan strongly condemns the attack by two suicide bombers that took place in Baghdad on 15 May, which killed at least 35 people and injured 90 others in an attack on a square where daytime labourers gather to look for work. We consider that attack hideous and cowardly, showing little respect for human life or the holy month of Ramadan.

Kazakhstan congratulates the leadership and the people of Iraq for the successful parliamentary elections held on 12 May. Following the military defeat of Dae'sh, the elections represent further progress in building a stronger Iraqi democracy. With those encouraging results, we call on all Iraqi political actors and their supporters to uphold peace as the results are processed. We furthermore urge political actors to resolve any electoral disputes through the established legal channels and to complete the electoral process by forming an inclusive Government as soon as possible. The world community should remain committed to supporting the Government and the people of Iraq in that endeavour.

The successful operations of the Iraqi Government against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) have been commended by all and are greatly appreciated. It is obvious that we must enhance the effectiveness of counter-terrorism mechanisms in Iraq and strengthen security measures at the borders following the expulsion of ISIL from Iraq. We would be glad to see Iraq join Kazakhstan's initiative on a code of conduct for achieving a world without terrorism. The international community must make every effort to consolidate stability and restore peace in Iraq after the expulsion of ISIL.

Kazakhstan is in favour of preserving the territorial integrity of Iraq as a State. There can be no lasting consolidation of peace efforts without bringing about reconciliation among the parties, together with justice and the rule of law throughout the country.

We underscore the inadmissibility of extrajudicial acts of retaliation against the supporters of ISIL, their family members and those with any connection to the group. We urge the Iraqi authorities to take urgent measures to bring perpetrators to justice, while upholding international law and international human rights law, and to refrain from actions that violate human freedom and justice. We were deeply shocked by the fate of 42-year-old housewife Amina Hassan, a Turkish woman who had two minutes to defend herself against charges of supporting the Islamic State. We have learned that the entire trial lasted just 10 minutes, before the judge sentenced her to death by hanging. Approximately 14 death sentences were handed out in a span of two hours to those accused of supporting the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, together with the sentencing of workers, wives and bystanders.

At the same time, we support measures to achieve the most critical goals in Iraq, which are, preserving unity, re-establishing stability and fostering peaceful coexistence among all segments of the population, including minorities. That commonly accepted approach should be based on equal rights and justice for all citizens. The challenge for Iraq now is to uphold the paramount principles of good democratic governance with deep, stable foundations.

Finally, we must support without hesitation the Special Representative's efforts to bring about a stable, post-ISIL Iraq with a new vision.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Iraq.

Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Republic of Poland on assuming the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to express my gratitude for its efforts in organizing the Council's work. I also thank the Republic of Peru for its efforts during its presidency of the Council last month. I would like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Mr. Ján Kubiš, for his briefing and to express my gratitude to him and his team for their hard and sincere work. I also would like to thank Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, and Ms. Michèle Coninsx, Assistant Secretary-General of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, for their briefings.

On 12 May, Iraqis went to the voting polls to elect the members of the Council of Representatives. Those elections were particularly important because they came on the heels of the defeat of Da'esh terrorist gangs in Iraq, which means that the 2018 Iraqi elections were another chapter of the war against terrorism in Iraq.

The large and unprecedented participation by female candidates in the elections for the Iraqi Council of Representatives was a positive sign and showed that Iraqi women have begun to prove themselves on the political scene. A large number of young people also participated in the elections as both voters and candidates, and, in doing so, sought to choose who would represent them and meet their expectations in the Parliament.

The Government of Iraq, based on its legal and constitutional duties, was able to provide a secure electoral environment, which enabled the various Iraqi segments of society to cast their votes in a safe and satisfactory manner. The Government also ensured all the conditions necessary to allow displaced persons to cast their votes, and thereby contribute to consolidating the democratic process in the country.

After the announcement of the election results, the Independent High Electoral Commission allowed complaints and appeals to be submitted by political entities and parties that had any observations or doubts about the results of the elections. The Commission will examine and audit those appeals in accordance with the rules and legal standards provided for by law in order for the Commission to then announce the final results and submit the names of the winners to the Federal Court for formal approval and adoption. The Council of Ministers and the Council of Representatives also focused on that matter so as to reassure all stakeholders.

During the next phase, Iraq will focus on revitalizing its economy and restoring normal social conditions. It will seek to support development and stability in all provinces and to create an attractive climate for investment in line with the approach taken by the previous Government. Iraq will also seek to implement the following strategies.

First, we will work to implement the strategic reconstruction plan, which will be a platform for launching projects in accordance with certain criteria and priorities that take into consideration the requirements for achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, as well as Iraq's vision for 2030.

Secondly, we will carry out the 2018-2022 National Strategy to Alleviate Poverty in Iraq with a view to significantly reducing overall poverty and creating more jobs and opportunities for young people.

Thirdly, the recovery and resilience programme launched by Secretary-General António Guterres consists of nine elements, three of which are to be implemented in high-priority communities where extremism is more likely to take root.

Fourthly, our national youth strategy, which was launched in cooperation with the United Nation Population Fund and is the first of its kind in the country, aims at preparing a generation that is productive and well educated, enjoys good mental, social and psychological health, maintains its national identity, plays a pivotal role in local communities and is immune to radical terrorist ideologies.

The Da'esh terrorist organization has shown extraordinary cruelty towards its victims, including men, women and children.

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 2379 (2017) was a victory for justice and fairness for the victims. The implementation of the resolution is currently under way, including procedures to set up the international investigative team. The team will be responsible for collecting evidence of crimes committed by Da'esh terrorist gangs and submitting it to the national judiciary in order to punish criminals. Iraq looks forward to cooperating fully and constructively with the investigative team.

Iraq will continue its efforts to provide redress and compensation to all the victims of horrendous crimes of sexual violence. It will involve women in all peacebuilding, reconciliation and reconstruction initiatives. We reaffirm our commitment to addressing the suffering of the victims of conflict-related sexual violence, which was made clear through the signing of the 2016 joint communiqué by the United Nations and Iraq to prevent and address conflict-related sexual violence, and the endorsement of the implementation plan of the joint communiqué, which outlines specific measures on justice, accountability and services. The signing took place during the latest visit to Iraq by Ms. Pramila Patten, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, upon an invitation from the Government, between 26 February and 5 March. Iraq looks forward to concrete outcomes from the implementation plan and a timetable for its assessment.

Iraq also issued the Iraqi national report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on 7 March, on the occasion of International Women's Day, which will be presented to the United Nations. Iraq will be the first country in the Middle East to report on the implementation of the resolution with regard to the role of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Iraqi authorities received Mr. Vladimir Voronkov, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism, and Ms. Michèle Coninsx, Assistant Secretary-General of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate, during their joint visit to Iraq on 7 and 8 March. The visit yielded fruitful results, including continued efforts to meet Iraq's 16 priorities set by the Counter-Terrorism Committee and its Executive Directorate in 2015 and the implementation of capacity-building projects to meet five of the 16 priorities. They include developing skills among youth through capacity-building in vocational and technical training institutes in Baghdad and Fallujah, supporting the development of a comprehensive national strategy to combat terrorism, combating the financing of terrorism through the most effective national and regional action plan, combating terrorist discourse through capacity-building for strategic communications and preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Iraq has established normal and balanced relations with all neighbouring countries and the with region to safeguard the interests of the Iraqi people on the basis of respect for sovereignty, mutual interests and the quest for common denominators, instead of conflicts that have destroyed the region. Iraq seeks to build a new foreign policy based on positive neutrality, while avoiding siding with one side against another. It is in Iraq's interest to stay away from conflicts in the region. Iraq believes that cooperation, partnership and mutual interests in various areas is the only way to achieve the aspirations of our people for security, stability and development, by enhancing political, security, economic and trade cooperation.

Iraq looks forward to building genuine and strategic partnerships based on the principle of integration with friendly and allied countries to help Iraq create a sound economic investment environment and thousands of job opportunities for young people and improve the living conditions and standards of its citizens. Development in Iraq is linked to the development of the entire region and of all its neighbours. It should be recalled that Iraq as a whole, and due to the war against terrorism, suffered from a decline in sustainable development. There are considerable opportunities for investment in all Iraqi provinces.

My country's Government has sought to fulfil the obligations related to outstanding issues between Iraq and the sisterly State of Kuwait. With regard to the issue of Kuwaiti missing persons, the competent Iraqi authorities continue to conduct their research and investigation. According to witness testimony, they have begun exploration and excavation processes in Shakhat and Ain Tamr in Karbala, Salman Pak in Baghdad, Khamisiyah in Dhi Qar, Salman Road in Muthanna and Al-Razi Street in Diyala. No remains have been found. The Iraqi Government is in the process of handing over the first recently found batch of Kuwaiti property and archives, following an agreement with UNAMI. The material will be transported to the State of Kuwait by air.

Lastly, I am pleased to highlight Iraq's willingness to extend the mandate of UNAMI for an additional year, according to the letter of His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to Secretary-General António Guterres, on 3 May. That is in accordance with the letter and spirit of resolution 1770 (2007), as well as the political mandate of the Mission, which has the ability to meet Iraq's needs in the post-victory period over Da'esh with a view to extending State authority across the country. Given the challenges faced by Iraq, UNAMI's mandate must remain as is in order to allow it to meet its commitments and provide advice and assistance to the Government and the people of Iraq, in particular on social and economic issues that affect the lives of Iraqi citizens. Iraq hopes that UNAMI and all the relevant United Nations agencies in Iraq will play a major role in rebuilding the country following the devastation caused by the war and the subsequent decline in basic services infrastructure, especially to restore stability in liberated areas and ensure the return of internally displaced persons.

In conclusion, I would like to clarify that the current criminal trials in Iraq cannot be concluded in minutes, as stated by my colleague the representative of Kazakhstan. Legal and judicial processes require that the investigating judge conduct a full investigation over an extended period before the case is referred to another judge, who will then adjudicate on the matter, according to Iraqi law.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.